

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
TOWN HALL HEARING ROOM
5/12/14

ATTENDEES:

Deyst*	White	Caccavaro*	Kellar*	McKenna*
DeCoursey	Connors*	Simmons*	Gibian	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Bayer*	Ronan	
Kardon	Beck*	Jones*	Deshler*	
Franclemont	Howard*	Fanning*	Carman*	Turkall*

VISITORS: Town Moderator John Leone, Chair Electronic Voting Committee Eric Helmuth

MINUTES of 5/5 & 5/7 approved as corrected. Unanimous

TOWN MEETING Tosti will make a small correction to the budget – the budget supports 47 patrolmen.

Foskett requested a correction to the Capital Budget. A W&S debt appropriation is in the wrong column. VOTED to approve the change unanimously.

ART 55 ELECTRONIC VOTING APPROPRIATION The committee requested \$35,000. This is the price to buy. Expected life is 5 years. The vote would give the Town Manager the freedom to lease, perhaps at a lesser cost. There is also a maintenance and staffing cost. Leone supports. Members said this is not an essential expenditure but the individual voting record is desirable. There was uncertainty whether the FinCom vote was a recommendation or a statement that the funds are available.

VOTED \$35,000 11-1

ART 56 FISCAL STABILIZATION FUND: VOTED to reduce by \$35k to compensate for Art 55 to \$4,275,363. Unanimous

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VISITORS: Deputy Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, Health & Human Services Director Christine Bongiorno, Mike Bouton, P Brennan, Visitors from Pakistan Rurhsana Aziz, Sanam Zarar

TRANSFER: Flanagan and Bongiorno requested \$40,000 to pay for unexpected veterans services. They said the demand has increased by \$5k/mo compared to last year due to more veterans seeking help and increased knowledge among veterans that help is available (Ref 1). Members questioned whether the FY15 budget is adequate. This budget is hard to predict. VOTED to transfer \$40,000 from the Reserve Fund to Veterans Services. Unanimous.

RESERVE FUND: \$413,654 - \$40,000 = \$373,654

Peter Howard 5/15 /14 Revised 5/20/14

Ref 1 Memo Bongiorno to Flanagan Transfer Request 5/14/14



Ref 1

Town of Arlington
Department of Health and Human Services

27 Maple Street
Arlington, MA 02476

Tel: (781) 316-3170
Fax: (781) 316-3175

MEMO

TO: Andrew Flanagan, Deputy Town Manager

FROM: Christine Bongiorno, Director of Health and Human Services

DATE: May 14, 2014

RE: Reserve Fund Transfer Request-Veterans Services FY14

I write to request \$40,000 from the reserve fund to pay for expenses above the FY14 allocated aid and assistance to veterans.

The Veterans Aid & Assistance (A&A) budget which includes both medical payment support as well as direct financial support has seen a dramatic increase in expenses during FY14. During the first six months of FY14, the monthly A&A expense averaged \$25,000/month and the last six months of FY14 including a projected figure for June, will be over \$28,000/month. During FY13, the average monthly A&A expense was \$23,000.

The A&A increase in expenses can be attributed to a couple of factors. First, the number of veterans that have contacted the Veterans Office for assistance has increased and this can be attributed to recent advertisements and direct marketing to veterans conducted by the Mass Department of Veterans Services as well as 'word of mouth' referrals by current clients. Secondly, there has been an increase in veterans moving into Arlington as a result of access to both services for veterans as well as housing and support for veterans in the area. Lastly, there are a larger number of younger veterans that have lost their jobs and have recently become eligible for A&A. For those younger veterans that do not receive other financial support, pensions or social security as is the case with Vietnam, Korean or WWII Veterans, they are eligible for a larger monthly assistance check. For example, one 80 year old WWII Veteran may receive a monthly check of \$150 but a recent 35 year old veteran may receive \$1,500 each month.

To address the growing budget, Jeff Chunglo, the new Veterans Agent, has taken the following steps:

- Reviewed each client file to determine potential future medical cost liability for the fund. For example, if a veteran is uninsured or underinsured for medical expenses, Mr. Chunglo has taken steps to enroll each veteran or dependent in health insurance. This has resulted in adding five new persons to the Medicare supplemental plan with a potential long term savings of thousands of dollars each year.

- Reviewed each client file to determine employment status. Mr. Chunglo has set up regular meetings with veterans who are eligible to work to begin the process of finding employment. A VA Job Finder Kiosk has been donated to the office and will be set up in a planned Arlington Veterans Job Center which will be located within the current Veterans Office at Town Hall.
- Mr. Chunglo has also worked closely with the Comptroller, Treasurer and the Mass Department of Veterans Services Office to determine how to better ensure that the town receives 75% reimbursement from DVS for each dollar paid out.

As a result of the increases, the Veterans Aid and Assistance Fund 0154382-5710 will require an additional \$40,000 to cover the remainder of the fiscal year.

FROM: Christine Bongiorno, Director of Health and Human Services

DATE: May 14, 2014

RE: Reserve Fund Transfer Request-Veterans Services FY14

I write to request \$40,000 from the reserve fund to pay for expenses above the FY14 allocated aid and assistance to veterans.

The Veterans Aid & Assistance (VAA) budget which includes both medical payment support as well as direct financial support has seen a dramatic increase in expenses during FY14. During the first six months of FY14, the monthly VAA expense averaged \$27,000/month and the last six months of FY14 including a projected figure for June will be over \$28,000/month. During FY13, the average monthly VAA expense was \$23,000.

The VAA increase in expenses can be attributed to a couple of factors. First, the number of veterans that have contacted the Veterans Office for assistance has increased and this can be attributed to recent advertisements and direct marketing to veterans conducted by the Mass Department of Veterans Services as well as word of mouth referrals by current clients. Secondly, there has been an increase in veterans moving into Arlington as a result of access to both services for veterans as well as housing and support for veterans in the area. Lastly, there are a larger number of younger veterans that have lost their jobs and have recently become eligible for VAA. For those younger veterans that do not receive other financial support, pensions or social security as is the case with Veterans, Korean or WWII Veterans, they are eligible for a larger monthly assistance check. For example, one 60 year old WWII Veteran may receive a monthly check of \$120 but a recent 32 year old veteran may receive \$1,200 each month.

To address the growing budget for Chunglo, the new Veterans Agent, has taken the following steps:

- Reviewed each client file to determine potential future medical cost liability for the fund. For example, if a veteran is uninsured or underinsured for medical expenses, Mr. Chunglo has taken steps to enroll each veteran or dependent in health insurance. This has resulted in adding five new persons to the healthcare supplemental plan with a potential long term savings of thousands of dollars each year.